

CS seek regionalisation of Ian reserve section

SPECIAL REPORT BY 'RANGER'

First they want to know if clubs would accept the structure of the reserve section as constituted at present, and secondly if clubs would support a reserve section system based on the Chesham proposals.

Many of the clubs unhesitatingly replied they did not wish to continue under the present set-up, and all these senters to the first query are fully behind the Chesham proposal.

What is so attractive and alluring about the Chesham voluntary section?

They have simply requested that the present system be scrapped; that all reserve leagues compete on a regionalised basis with the Divisional principle being abolished and substituted by a geographical yardstick.

Basically what this means is that reserve team football receives a massive shot in the arm, for suddenly men-and-children could revive the old, long-lost and sadly dead old rivalries—and hatreds!

Take for example the position of Marlow at the present moment. Everywhere their Division 2 first team travels, the reserves must duly follow. But where do they go? If not from Windsor and Eton, there is not one surviving "darby" or "needle" game in their entire programme.

"The Legions of the Lost" — this is the name Marlow Reserves have applied to themselves for many years — could, under the proposals from Chesham United, suddenly become a far more attractive proposition to watch than the first team. And indeed, to come to think of it, the club treasurer might well rub his hands at the prospect of a Marlow Reserves home game and despite over a forthcoming first team match.

For what Chesham United are asking is for the 48 Athenian Clubs to forget the status of their first teams and play in four sections each containing 12 sides who are near-neighbours.

This could mean that instead of having teams at the Alfred Deller Memorial Ground from Kent, Surrey, Hertfordshire and Essex, in whom there is almost no interest at all, the second team from Hayes, Hemel Hempstead United, Slough Town, Southall, Wembley, Wokingham, Uxbridge, Windsor, Chesham and Marlow.

It will be quickly seen that six of these sides are at present in the Premier Section, two are in Division 1 and the remainder visit Marlow anyway, when the "gates" are usually higher for the visit of these clubs than any other anyway each year.

The whole atmosphere regarding reserve football within

the Division 2 for the past four seasons has been one of frustration and dissatisfaction. The most ardent opponents of the present compulsory scheme—and it is a condition of membership that these reserve sides must be run—have usually been the club treasurers.

From personal experience having travelled to over 30 per cent of Athenian League grounds and having deliberately discussed this point with club officials, I am not the least surprised that revolution has at last boiled to the surface.

More power to the elbow of Chesham United for kicking open the door. They will undoubtedly have considerable support from every quarter of the Athenian League territory.

It is to be sincerely hoped that Chesham's move carries the day. What is needed today at all levels of administration is common sense. The annual economic disasters inflicted on clubs as a result of having to carry untrained, unloved and unloved-to-be reserve teams, could be transformed by dropping reserve elevens entirely.

While this would no doubt make the treasurers happy at the vast savings they could effect as a result on players' expenses, laundry, heating, lighting, water and heating at home, as well as travel to away games, there would suddenly be a great many footballers kicking their heels and looking for other clubs.

The Chesham compromise may not be the entire answer, but the whole thing is founded on sound common sense from the clubs', spectators' and league's point of view, and it is certainly deserving of a thorough and fair

GOOD LUCK LADS

Patrick Vercoe's farewell

activities at London Park

and the socials.

The making of the reserves, which I have already mentioned, is another nail in the coffin. Something must be done to check this downward trend and, perhaps, fresh ideas at the top might be the answer.

In a recent letter to the "Free Press" present chairman Jack Samuels commented he would welcome an offer from younger people to help him the administration of the club.

Those of us who care deeply about Wanderers must be prepared to give up valuable time to help my and remove the club to its former glories.

It is no good just one or two individuals coming forward full of enthusiasm. What is required are men who know the game inside out, have the contacts so necessary to acquire the right players, and have the business acumen needed to run the club on professional lines. This will be a sound basis for recovery.

One question which constantly runs through my mind is how the former players sit back and watch the club slip to its high potential which they helped to reach?

While not wishing to compare the two reserves, I fully realise they give up valuable spare time and believe sincerely that the decisions they take are for the best. I cannot help but feel that a large slice of the trouble lies on their shoulders.

But, until new faces step forward the present situation will not change. During my stay I have grown deeply attached to the fortunes of Wycombe Wanderers.

I desperately want to see the club succeed. The support is there and it's about time the former fans were rewarded.

At 4.30 p.m. on each Saturday afternoon during the 70s my thoughts will turn automatically to Wycombe Wanderers and what the outcome of their endeavours of the bold have achieved.

I just hope and pray Wanderers will still exist in the 80s looking up.

Steve Freeman wrecks mighty Aveley in Marlow debut

By 'RANGER'
Marlow 3, Aveley 1

FORMER Wycombe Wanderers Reserve player, Steve Freeman made a sensational debut for his new club, Marlow, on Saturday.

His appearance on the field as substitute for the injured Bernie Saunders, nine minutes after the start of the second period prompted, influenced and finally fired Marlow into a furious and fabulous drubbing of mighty Aveley—current leaders of Athenian League, Division 2 and hot favourites for promotion.

While one of the oldest adages in association football is never ride a team—add a testimony to its truth, every day a team is kicked the right way in the right place can't make a tremendous difference to a team, and on Saturday that really summed up the situation to far as Freeman was concerned.

For most of the first 45 minutes it looked like being a repeat of what most Marlow fans have become accustomed to seeing far too often—their team dominating the play but not delivering the goods.

Mick Page—who might well be termed the scourge of Aveley in view of his record against the Essex team—was very unfortunate indeed not to score with a header in the first two minutes.

Page actually netted in the 15th minute but this was ruled out because of alleged offside against him.

Then with 22 minutes gone, Alan Beresford, a fine and powerfully-built inside-right, made a magnificent goal out of virtually nothing at all. He sent in a whiz-bang of a shot from the left-hand edge of the penalty area, across goal and the ball raced home into Dave Wigley's right-hand side of the net. The move started with a throw-in on the right wing and there appeared at that moment to be no danger whatever!

It seemed obvious that goals would come in thick and fast, and that was the case, as the Bucks side, but even with Bernie Saunders doing all he knew until injured in the 34th minute, Marlow still stalled. Then, Saunders was crocked in a collision with Tony Wiseman, the Aveley keeper.

On stepped Freeman. In his 35th minute Marlow were level. Both Freeman and Radmore so rattled in the Aveley defense that finally Tony Rogers, the league leaders' right-back, in making an obvious attempt to scoop the ball over the bar for a corner to get out of trouble, only succeeded in hitting Wiseman with a lob that was not strong enough.

A THREE-YEARS reign of watching over and reporting on the activities of Wycombe Wanderers F.C. comes to a close at the end of this week when I say my valedict to the "Free Press".

During my spell Wanderers have managed to capture not the major titles, state—admittedly a number of minor competitions were won—but there were exciting and tense moments.

Two matches stand out in my memory. Both took place in 1968 and involved cup competition.

THE DATE: January 28, the place: Norwich, the competition: F.A. Amateur Cup, the opposition: City of Norwich School Old Boys Union.

Even now the result—a 1-0 success for the OH Boys—remains impossible to comprehend. Wanderers completely dominated the game forcing well over 30 corners but, watched by a 2,000 crowd packed closely round an open playing field, could not get the ball in the net.

It was no one-sided that it began to get boring to watch as Wycombe pressed relentlessly forward. Worley hit a post, shots were turned regularly off the bar, then almost unbelievably, Norwich broke away and Alan Taylor who had been instrumental with Norwich City, forced the ball past Marlow.

How vividly I remember the train journey back from Norwich. Hardly any of the Wanderers players spoke to each other and even months after the result one player remarked to me "I shall never forget that defeat."

The other occasion reaches on a more happy note. The date: April 25, the venue: Chesham, the competition: Berks and Bucks Senior Cup Final, the opposition: Slough Town.

In front of a crowd over 3,000 mark Wanderers pulled off the coup of the season beating the fancied Slough 3-2 in extra-time.

Drama ran through this clash from the start to the finish. For Wanderers this final was the only glamour in a poor season. Slough were so confident that the victory had already been ordered.

Goals from Horncastle (2) and Samuels' disputed extra-time winner, heralded the large booking in the Bank Holiday sunshine described that day as "a glorious day" and this was exactly what it was.

As I entered the Slough dressing room at the end a number of the players were reduced to tears. No words were needed from their manager Bob Gibbs.

Now at this famous old club, steeped in so much history and tradition, enter the '70s I am worried and concerned over the future. Instead of making progress,

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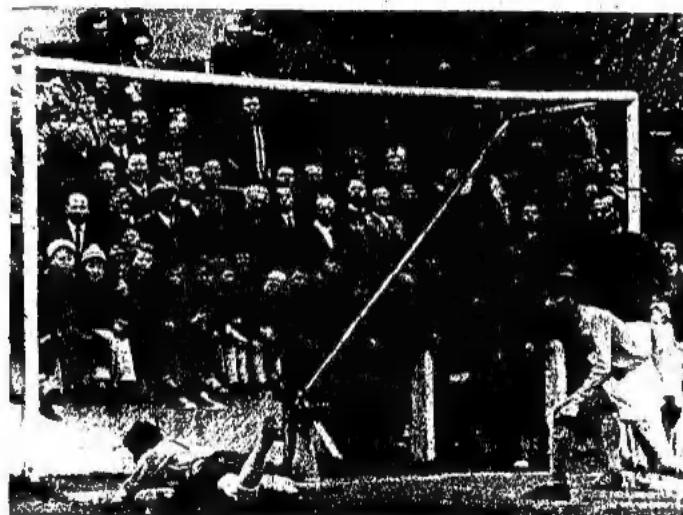
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The crowd give vent to their feelings as Tony Horne man goes full length for a cross, which he just missed, with the Sutton defence wide open.

Chalfont miss forward power and lose a negative game

Chalfont St. Peter 0, Egham Town 1

CHALFONT ST. PETER's need for effective strikers was clearly underlined by this uninteresting Spartan League match at the Playing Fields on Saturday. Negative football was the order of the listless day.

The number of really determined efforts at goal-scoring could be counted on one hand — one of these coming from Dave Timberlake in the first half with a powerful angled shot that goal-keeper Shrimpton just managed to stop.

Undoubtedly, the home team's best effort came from Derek Bratton in the 39th minute when he ran onto a good cross by Timberlake and his determined header crashed against a post.

The only goal of the match was scored in the 60th minute, resulting from a corner by Egham. The ball was cleared out by the Chalfont defence and Barry Caton hit a low drive from 25 yards through a sea of legs which left Frank Howard temporarily unbreathable. It was unfortunate for Howard who



Tony Horne is harassed in midfield during Saturday's clash with beaten Amateur Cup finalists Sutton United.